LISTING OF PENDING CLAIMS

1.   (Previously Presented) A method for conducting an electronic negotiation of a commercial transaction wherein said electronic negotiation is guaranteed to terminate, comprising:

a step of advertising a product with an advertisement, wherein said product that is to be negotiated is listed by a first negotiating party, the advertisement comprising a set of attribute-value pairs, each attribute-value pair including an attribute and a range of values for the attribute, for the product listed in the advertisement;

a step of looking up, wherein the product listed in the advertisement is located for a second negotiating party, wherein at least one of a first set of attribute-value pairs is displayed to the second negotiating party;

a step of offering, wherein the second negotiating party offers to negotiate one or more attributes for the product listed in the advertisement;

a step of counter-offering, wherein the first negotiating party responds to the offer with a first counter-offer; and

a step of displaying at least one of a second set of attribute-value pairs to the second negotiating party if each attribute is not agreed to or a failed negotiation is not declared, wherein the second negotiating party and the first negotiating party continue to exchange counter-offers until each attribute is agreed to or the failed negotiation is declared.

2.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of looking up locates the product listed in the advertisement by comparing one or more attribute-values provided by the second negotiating party with the set of attribute-value pairs in the advertisement.

3.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of offering comprises a first proposed range of values that the second negotiating party is offering for a first attribute that is included in the set of attribute-value pairs.

4.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein the first counter-offer comprises a second proposed range of values that the first negotiating party is offering for the first attribute.

5.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein the second proposed range of values consists of the same values as the first proposed range of values and the first counter-offer further comprises a third proposed list of values or range of values that the first negotiating party is offering for a second attribute that is included in the set of attribute-value pairs.

6.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the first proposed range of values is a list in order from the second negotiating party's most preferred value to the second negotiating party's least preferred value.

7.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein the first counter-offer further comprises a single proposed value that the first negotiating party is offering for a third attribute that is included in the set of attribute-value pairs.

8.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, further comprising a second counter-offer, in which the second negotiating party responds to the first counter-offer, the second counter-offer comprising the single proposed value from the first counter-offer, whereby the inclusion of the single proposed value indicates that the third attribute is agreed to and is prohibited from being further negotiated.

9.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the attribute-value pairs comprise an attribute that is negotiated with single proposed values.

10.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the offer and the one or more counter-offers introduce a value for each attribute in the set of attribute-value pairs, the negotiation protocol further comprising an offer that includes a single value for each attribute and in response to which the agreement is reached or the failed negotiation is declared.

11.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein one or more attributes from the set of attribute-value pairs are introduced and each counter-offer includes a value for each attribute that was previously introduced except for previously agreed to attributes.

12.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein one or more attributes from the set of attribute-value pairs are introduced with a corresponding range of values and each counter-offer reduces the range of values for at least one attribute that was previously introduced, by narrowing a gap between values for a previously introduced attribute or by introducing a new attribute from the set of attribute-value pairs.

13.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein a single value for a first attribute from the set of attribute-value pairs is agreed to in a counter-offer and the first attribute is prohibited from being introduced into any subsequent counter-offer.

14.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of entering into an agreement, wherein said agreement is entered into when each attribute is agreed to, whereby the first negotiating party and the second negotiating party finalize the delivery of the product.

15.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the first counter-offer includes a declaration of a failed negotiation due to the second negotiating party failing to comply with the negotiation protocol, whereby the failed negotiation is declared.

16.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein one of the counter-offers introduces two or more different values for at least one attribute from the attribute-value pairs.

17.   (Previously Presented) A method for electronically negotiating a commercial transaction that is guaranteed to terminate, said method comprising:

advertising a product that is offered for electronic negotiation by a first negotiating party, wherein the advertising step comprises listing a set of attribute-value pairs for the product, wherein each attribute-value pair includes an attribute and a negotiable list of values for the attribute;

looking-up the product from the advertising step, wherein the looking-up step comprises:

displaying to a second negotiating party the set of attribute-value pairs, and

comparing one or more attribute-values provided by the second negotiating party with the set of attribute-value pairs in the advertisement to find a match;

offering to electronically negotiate one or more attributes from the attribute-value pairs for the product, wherein the offering step comprises proposing the second negotiating party's list of values for a first attribute from the set of attribute-value pairs;

countering the offering step with the first negotiating party's proposal of a list of values for the first attribute of the product;

displaying to the second negotiating party the first negotiating party's proposal;

determining one of: when each attribute from the attribute-value pairs is agreed to, and when a failed negotiation is declared; and

conducting one or more additional countering steps until one of: each attribute from the attribute-value pairs is agreed to, and the failed negotiation is declared, wherein the second negotiating party and the first negotiating party alternate conducting the countering steps until one of: each attribute from the attribute-value pairs is agreed to, and the failed negotiation is declared.

18.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein each countering step, one of: reduces a list of values for a previously introduced attribute, narrows a gap between values for a previously introduced attribute, and introduces a new attribute from a set of attribute-value pairs unless one of: each attribute from the attribute-value pairs is agreed to, and the failed negotiation is declared.

19.   (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein one of the countering steps lists a single value for each previously introduced attribute from the set of attribute-value pairs.

20.   (Canceled)

21.   (Previously Presented) A computer program product having computer readable medium with computer program logic recorded thereon for conducting an electronic negotiation that is guaranteed to terminate, said computer program product comprising:

code for advertising a product that is to be electronically negotiated wherein said product is listed by a first negotiating party and said code for advertising operates to produce an advertisement comprising a set of attribute-value pairs, each attribute-value pair including an attribute and a range of values for the attribute, for the product listed in the advertisement;

code for looking-up said product listed in said advertisement for a second negotiating party, wherein at least one of a first set of attribute-value pairs is displayed to said second negotiating party;

code for enabling said second negotiating party to submit an offer to negotiate one or more attributes for said product listed in said advertisement; and

code for enabling said first negotiating party to respond to said offer with a first counter-offer and, when one of: each attribute is not agreed to, and a failed negotiation is not declared then at least one of a second set of attribute-value pairs is displayed to said second negotiating party, wherein the second negotiating party and the first negotiating party continue to exchange counter-offers until one of: each attribute is agreed to, and the failed negotiation is declared.

22.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21 wherein said code for looking-up said product locates the product listed in the advertisement by comparing one or more attribute-values provided by the second negotiating party with the set of attribute-value pairs in the advertisement.

23.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21 wherein said offer comprises a first proposed range of values that the second negotiating party is offering for a first attribute that is included in the set of attribute-value pairs.

24.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein the first counter-offer comprises a second proposed range of values that the first negotiating party is offering for the first attribute.

25.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 24, wherein the second proposed range of values consists of the same values as the first proposed range of values and the first counter-offer further comprises a third proposed range of values that the first negotiating party is offering for a second attribute that is included in the set of attribute-value pairs.

26.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 25, wherein the first proposed range of values is a list in order from the second negotiating party's most preferred value to the second negotiating party's least preferred value.

27.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 24, wherein the first counter-offer further comprises a single proposed value that the first negotiating party is offering for a third attribute that is included in the set of attribute-value pairs.

28.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 27, further comprising code for enabling said second negotiating party to respond to said first counter-offer with a second counter-offer, wherein the second counter-offer comprises the single proposed value from the first counter-offer, whereby the inclusion of the single proposed value indicates that the third attribute is agreed to and is prohibited from being further negotiated.

29.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21, wherein the attribute-value pairs comprise an attribute that is negotiated with single proposed values.

30.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21, wherein the offer and the one or more counter-offers introduce a value for each attribute in the set of attribute-value pairs, the computer program product further comprising code for creating a final offer that includes a single value for each attribute and in response to said final offer one of: the agreement is reached, and the failed negotiation is declared.

31.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21, wherein one or more attributes from the set of attribute-value pairs are introduced and each counter-offer includes a value for each attribute that was previously introduced except for previously agreed to attributes.

32.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21, wherein one or more attributes from the set of attribute-value pairs are introduced with a corresponding range of values and each counter-offer reduces the range of values for at least one attribute that was previously introduced, and one of: narrows a gap between values for a previously introduced attribute, and introduces a new attribute from the set of attribute-value pairs.

33.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21, wherein a single value for a first attribute from the set of attribute-value pairs is agreed to in a counter-offer and the first attribute is prohibited from being introduced into any subsequent counter-offer.

34.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21, further comprising code for creating an agreement, that is entered into when each attribute is agreed to, whereby said code for creating an agreement assists the first negotiating party and the second negotiating party in finalizing the delivery of the product.

35.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21, wherein the first counter-offer includes a declaration of a failed negotiation due to the second negotiating party failing to comply with rules of the negotiation, whereby the failed negotiation is declared.

36.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21, wherein one of the counter-offers introduces two or more different values for at least one attribute from the attribute-value pairs.